

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 270943Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5716

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL SYDNEY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SEOUL 1486

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y ( P A R A 3 )

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, KN

SUBJECT: KOREA AT 31ST UNGA: CONSULTATIONS

PLEASE PASS ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

REF: SEOUL 1400

1. MOFA INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND TREATIES BUREAU  
DIRECTOR CHUNG WOO-YOUNG CALLED IN POLCOUNS FEBRUARY 27  
TO DISCUSS FURTHER AMBASSADOR'S AND FOREIGN MINISTER'S  
FEBRUARY 24 CONSULTATIONS ON KOREAN ITEM AT 31ST UNGA  
(REFTEL).

2. ACTING UNDER FOREIGN MINISTER'S INSTRUCTION, AND AFTER  
ASKING IF EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS,  
CHUNG BRIEFLY REITERATED ROKG POSITION DELINEATED BY FOREIGN  
MINISTER THREE DAYS AGO, ADIDING THAT MOFA HAD BEEN  
SURPRISED AT STRENGTH OF US STAND. BECAUSE OF  
SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH IT VIEWED 31ST UNGA OUTLOOK, SAID CHUNG,  
ROKG AFTER GIVING THOUGHT TO AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST  
TO RECONSIDER ITS PROPOSED APPROACH TO CORE GROUP  
MEETING HAD CONCLUDED IT COULD NOT CHANGE ITS POSITION.

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ROKG WAS PREPARED AS U.S. SIDE HAD SUGGESTED TO LAY

OUT OBJECTIVES AND OPTIONS AT CORE MEETING AND DESCRIBE ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS IN OBJECTIVE FASHION. HOWEVER, IF ASKED, AS THEY INEVITABLY WOULD BE, FOR THEIR OWN VIEWS, KOREAN DELEGATES WOULD HAVE TO EXPRESS PREFERENCE FOR DELAYING SUBMISSION OF ANY RESOLUTION UNTIL AFTER NORTH KOREA HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE.

3. CHUNG WENT ON TO SAY THAT WITH ONLY LITTLE MORE THAN A WEEK LEFT BETWEEN NOW AND PROPOSED MARCH 8 - 9 DATE FOR CORE MEETING IT OBVIOUSLY TOO LATE TO CONVENE MEETING ON THOSE DATES. SINCE ATTENDEES SHOULD BE GIVEN AT LEAST TWO WEEKS ADVANCE NOTICE, MEETING WOULD NOW PROBABLY HAVE TO BE POSTPONED UNTIL SOME TIME IN LATE MARCH. CHUNG NOTED THAT POSTPONEMENT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN SINCE IT COULD INDICATE EITHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ROK/US SIDES OR THAT TWO OF US "WERE COOKING UP SOMETHING TO SPRING ON OTHER CORE MEMBERS". THERE WAS NEED FOR EXPLANATION CHUNG SAID SINCE MOFA HAD ALREADY SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF MEETING ON MARCH 8 OR 9 TO JAPANESE AND HAD INDICATED MID-MARCH AS POSSIBLE DATE TO OTHER CORE MEMBERS. CHUNG THEN ASKED IF WE THOUGHT THAT SAYING FOREIGN MINISTER PARK WAS TRAVELLING TO ASEAN COUNTRIES FROM MARCH 9 -25 AND WISHED TO CONSULT WITH THEM PRIOR TO CORE MEETING WOULD BE CONVINCING REASON FOR EXPLAINING DELAY TO CORE MEMBERS.

4. IN RESPONSE ABOVE, POLCOUNS CITING POINTS MADE BY AMBASSADOR AT FEBRUARY 24 MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER REGARDING IMPORTANCE TAKING POSITIVE, FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO KOREAN ISSUE AT CORE MEETING, URGED THAT KOREAN SIDE NOT CEASE CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF SUCH APPROACH. CURRENT ROK APPROACH APPEARED TO CONCEDE DEFEAT. POLCOUNS THEN POINTED OUT THAT IF EVIDENCE OF SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ROK AND US SIDES ON THIS ISSUE WERE TO SURFACE IT COULD HAVE EXTREMELY DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS. EVIDENCE OF SPLIT WOULD SERVE NO ONE BUT NORTH KOREA'S PURPOSE. AT SAME TIME POLCOUNS SAID IN LIGHT ROK ACTIONS TO DATE HE NOT SURE CORE MEETING DELAY COULD BE CONVINCINGLY EXPLAINED AND EXPRESSED SOME DOUBT REGARDING EFFORTS TO PAPER OVER DIFFERENCES AND EXPLAIN DELAY WITH ASEAN TRIP EXCUSE.

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POLCOUNS DID NOTE THAT AS REPORTED USUN 0712 CANADIANS WERE REQUESTING DELAY OF MEETING UNTIL LATE MARCH AND THIS MIGHT PROVIDE REASON FOR DELAY. POLCOUNS THEN ASKED IF DECISION NOT TO RECONSIDER THEIR APPROACH ALSO RULED OUT AMBASSADOR'S FEBRUARY 24 SUGGESTION THAT WE JOINTLY FOLLOW U.S. PROPOSED POSITIVE APPROACH AT CORE MEETING EVEN THOUGH ROKS STILL HARBORED RESERVATIONS.

5. IN RESPONSE TO THIS LAST QUESTION, CHUNG ASKED THAT IT BE "PUT ASIDE FOR TIME BEING" AND THAT WE CONTINUE TO FOCUS INSTEAD ON FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US. IN CLOSING CHUNG , WHILE AGREEING TO NECESSITY OF STICKING TOGETHER, URGED U.S.TO RE-STUDY VERY CAREFULLY ROKG PROPOSAL, HOPED THAT WE COULD AGREE TO IT, AND REPEATED REQUEST FOR ANY SUGGESTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE TO EXPLAIN DELAY OF MEETING TO CORE MEMBERS.

6. COMMENT: CHUNG'S REMARKS DESIGNED TO UNDERLINE STRENGTH WITH WHICH ROKG HOLDING TO ITS POSITION, AND TO EXTRACT MOST POSSIBLE FROM US IN WAY OF CONCESSION TO THEIR VIEW. WHILE IT APPEARS STILL POSSIBLE TO GET KOREANS TO HOLD LINE FOR PURPOSES OF CORE MEETING, FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THEIR POSITION AT THIS TIME WITHOUT OTHER CORE MEMBER PRESSURE SEEMS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY. ACCORDINGLY EMBASSY AGAIN SUGGESTS WE CONCENTRATE ON SEEKING ROK AGREEMENT AT LEAST TO HOLD LINE FOR CORE MEETING, WHILE REITERATING ARGUMENTS AGAINST ROKG APPROACH.

7. AS REGARDS RATIONALE FOR DELAY, WE ASSUME ASEAN EXCUSE WOULD ANNOY MANY CORE MEMBERS. PERHAPS CANADIANS' PROBLEM COULD BE USED TO PAPER OVER TIMING PROBLEM, IF DEPARTMENT AGREES THIS WOULD BE DESIRABLE. HOWEVER, WE SUSPECT IT MAY BE DIFFICULT AVOID WORD LEAKING OUT OF DIFFERENCES IN US-ROKG APPROACH.

8. I INTEND TO GO TO BAT AGAIN WITH FONMIN PARK EARLY NEXT WEEK (POSSIBLY MARCH 2) AND REQUEST GUIDANCE BEFOREHAND. FRANKLY, I AMVERY TEMPTED TO TELL ROKG THAT, IF THEY WISH TO GO THEIR OWN WAY ON UNGA HANDLING, WE ARE PREPARED TO SIT BACK AND LET  
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THEM TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES. THIS MAY BE THE ONLY WAY TO BRING THEM UP SHORT. SNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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